

Lighting The Road To The Future

New Orleans

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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"



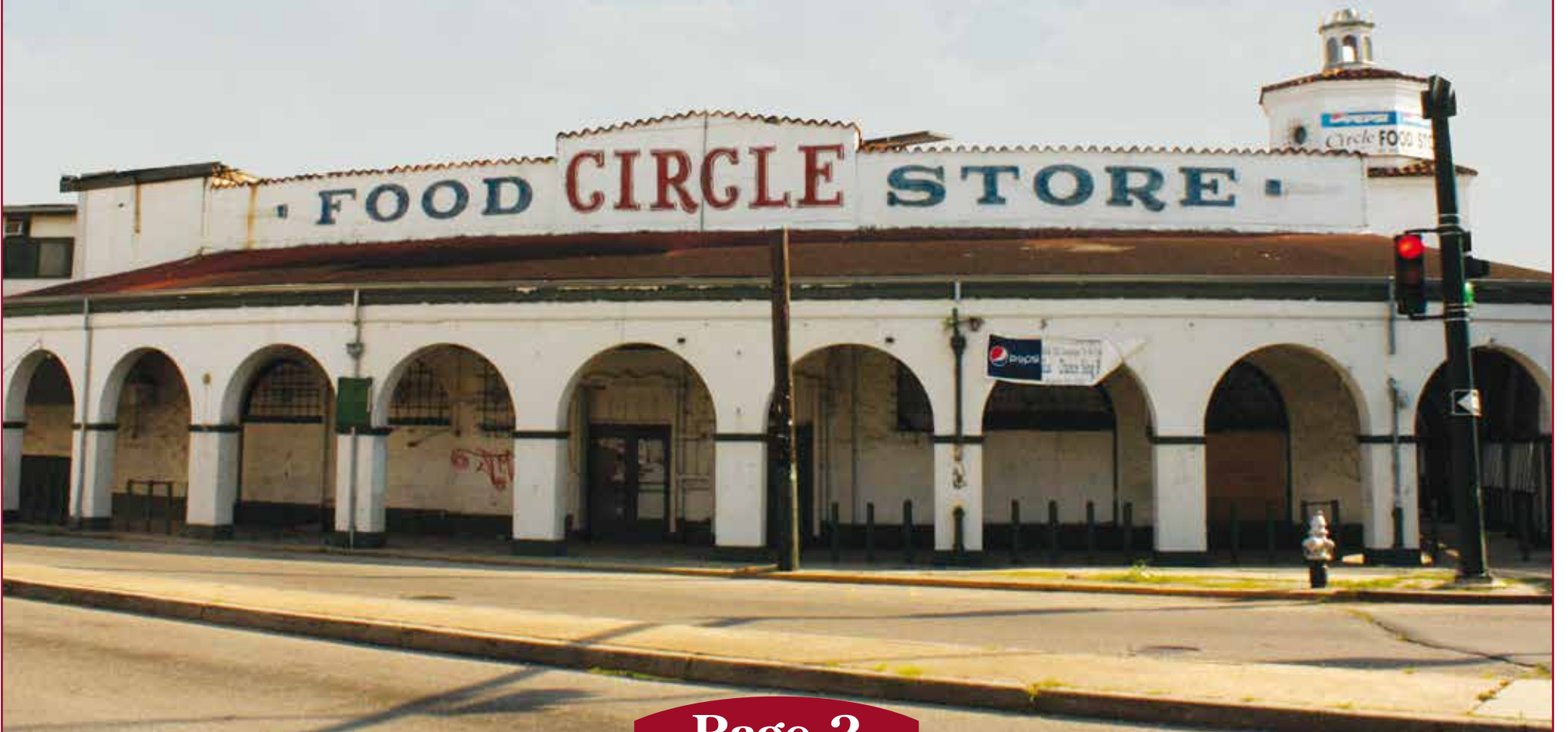
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Coming Full Circle

Circle Foods Represents the Rebirth of a City



The Circle Food Store stood as an infamous icon after Hurricane Katrina, as millions saw on television the devastation the storm and flood brought to New Orleans. Today plans are going forward to bring back the store, and with that fresh food to the neighborhood.

By Edwin Buggage

The Re-opening of the Circle Food Store Inspires a City

As a City is in the mode of recovery and is nearing the 7th Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. When one drives around the City, there are still reminders of the City darkest days. And while the City is ablaze with economic activity and building projects, there are still areas that are pockets of

distress. During Hurricane Katrina there were many images that showed the world this jewel of a City under siege possibly never to return to its rustic splendor.

One of the images that have become ingrained in the minds of people across the globe is the iconic photo of the Circle Food Store, a great New Orleans institution. As it was the first African-American owned and operated store of its scale and size, starting out in New Orleans in 1919 as an open air market and then becoming Circle Food Store in

1938 owned by Herbert Gabriel. When the waters came in drowning the City and bringing it to its knees, this hallowed institution sat under water for nearly a month. It soon became a symbol of the despair of a community struggling to recover, rebuild and gain some sense of normalcy. Today with the help of a 1 million dollar loan from the New Orleans Fresh Food Initiative with 500,000 of that amount forgivable, and along with other resources the Circle Food Store, or "The Circle" as regulars call it could re-open by Easter of 2013.

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

"I am very elated, it has been a long hard struggle, we finally got a team together, Tulane City Center and the 7th Ward Neighborhood Association, the Fresh Food Initiative and my developer the Berger Group," says Dwayne Boudreaux, the owner of the Cir-

Chez Helene, the Circle Theater, we use to go to the Autocrat on Friday for dances, and in spite of what was going on outside of our community this area was a source of pride for us and I am excited about the return of the Circle Food Store."



cle Food Store since 1991; after working there for several years he acquired it from longtime owner and founder Herbert Gabriel, who passed away in 2011. Continuing he says of the historic significance and it symbolizing a renaissance for the City and the 7th Ward he remarks, "There are people who feel that when they come back something is missing, that things are not the same, so with us re-opening the store we can give them something familiar that reminds them of the greatness of our City and that we are rebuilding and making the City better for everyone. And we are a symbol of hope for our City moving forward."

A Circle of History

The Circle Food Store has a rich history, located in the City's Seventh Ward that was once a burgeoning area full of life with its many businesses' activity and it was the hub for African-Americans during the days of segregation. North Claiborne Avenue with its large median or neutral ground as it is called by locals was the place to be for Mardi Gras, or just taking care of everyday activities. Recalling what it was like during those times and the significance of Circle Food Store, Phyllis Calvin, says, "I remember it as a very vibrant area where people did their shopping, and there were so many other businesses in the vicinity such as



Circle Food Store Owner Dwayne Boudreaux

Teri Mojani, reminisces on her childhood in the early 1960's living only a block and a half from "The Circle" "It was a hub and a meeting place for people in the community, it is where you saw people from your neighborhood, the people you went to school or church with, it was for us like an anchor and one of the many places that people gathered." Continuing she says, "One of the attractions of the store for me when I was young was during Easter they would have displayed on the sidewalk all kinds of chocolate bunnies, candy, and colored eggs, going to the Circle and seeing this was one of the great things I remember about growing up in New Orleans during those times."

An Avenue of Hope

One side of the Circle Food Store is located on St Bernard Avenue, where there are several businesses that run from North Claiborne to North Rampart. One of the business owners is a family with deep roots in the community and is investing their resources in its revitalization. Glenn Amedee and his family grew up in the neighborhood and own the Wisdom Hall and another property where plans are slated to build an entertainment venue called "Inspire" that will bring in national acts and hopes to draw people from the neighboring parishes, the south east region as well as bringing tourist to the area. It is his hope that this already busy thoroughfare will become another destination for people coming to experience New Orleans. Speaking of his business ventures and vision for the street he says, "Our new project is on target, and I believe our entertainment venue is going to be a help to the community and bring more people into the area. I would love to see St. Bernard Ave. become a different type of Magazine Street or something similar to Frenchman Street where you have a mix of businesses because when you think about it our street is the gateway to the French Quarter."

There is a sense of nostalgia and local feel that surrounds "The Circle" and Boudreaux understands that is a major attraction to the store and says he will continue in the tradition the brand has built throughout its years of existence, "What we're trying to do is bring everything back we did in the past, we want it to still have that Circle Food Store feel. And we want it to have that feeling of a social gathering place, and supply everything we did in the past and more, but with a more up to date modern facility and bring a great shopping experience to the customer."

The Circle Food Store is a 22,000 square foot building, that once fully renovated can serve as a flagship business in the community bringing an estimated 75 jobs in addition to millions in revenues inside the community. Boudreaux hopes the re-opening of store can help other businesses come back into the area, "I feel we are like a nucleus that will anchor the community and create activity where other businesses

both large and small can benefit. Not only around it, but inside our store as well, we are trying to make space for other businesses to come in with us because I feel through our collective efforts we can make this area vibrant with business activity."

Dwayne Boudreaux...The Man Behind Circle Food Store

Many know the brand, but they do not know the man behind this great institution and its return. Since 1991 Dwayne Boudreaux has been at the helm as the owner of the Circle Food Store. He has decades of experience in the grocery store business. Talking about his background and how he came to Circle he says, "I am a guy from New Orleans that got in the grocery business at Delchamps, I have studied marketing in college and got into management and worked my way up. I worked another company as well. And Mr. Gabriel heard about the work we were doing and he said I want that young man to work for me and the rest is history." Understanding of market trends and how a business must adjust to a changing business environment to stay relevant is important in any industry, when Boudreaux came to the Circle Food Store he took to more innovative marketing methods and took the business to new heights; something that so impressed the founder he eventually sold him the business.

Recalling this time and the invaluable experience and knowledge he gained working with the Circle Food Store Founder, Mr. Gabriel, who he calls a mentor and father-like figure he said, "I was working in the store, and I came in with my experience and turned it in a different direction. I began listening to the customers and the community and gave them the things they needed. Mr. Herbert Gabriel came to me and said he appreciated the job I was doing and wanted to work out a situation where I could own the store."

Coming Full Circle

Seven years later New Orleans has been through many ups and downs. Today it is on the verge of a renaissance. Today in parts of the City there are signs of progress as a City is rebuilding and changing. Areas are being redeveloped and some concerned about gentrification and

that African-Americans will be left out of the economic equation. Glenn Amedee says that African-Americans should invest at the early stages of redevelopment so they can be part of and benefit from the economic gains of these efforts to stimulate the economies of their neighborhood, "Individuals use the word gentrification, but I was once told the only way you control an area is to buy the area and we as African-Americans are not going to stop others from coming into the community, this neighborhood, the 7th Ward, is near the most valuable properties in the City. We should not worry about what others are doing, but what we as African-Americans need to do is put our monies together and buy into the area as well and don't get left out. Buy houses, start businesses and create opportunities to empower ourselves."

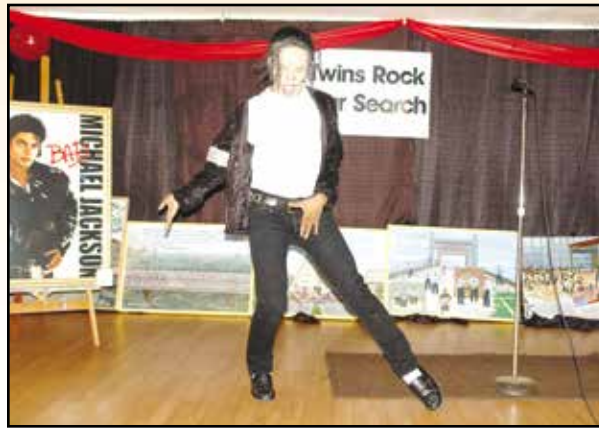
Dwayne Boudreaux says the storm was an epiphany like moment for his business and the people of the City. It was something that strengthening their relationship to one and other. As this historic icon has become a symbol of a City's recovery, "I didn't realize how much this store meant to the community until after Hurricane Katrina, and I think the community didn't know how much we meant to it until after the storm, but I am excited about us returning to serve the people of this great City and giving them a piece, the feel of home for so much have been lost."

New Orleans continues to make steps forward coming back after the storm. An energy that is primarily fueled by the resilient spirit of its people; and yes New Orleans is on the verge of a renaissance. As after nearly seven years the life blood is beginning to flow through veins and arteries giving the City a sense of a new life. Boudreaux is upbeat and says of his City and the restoration of this icon should give people all over the City hope that brighter days are on the horizon, "There is no place like New Orleans and a lot of it is inspired by the seventh ward and the Circle Food Store is like it's heartbeat, I think this is a symbol of our victory after Katrina and a long hard journey and I hope it can be a catalyst to inspire others to come together to make the City a better City."

Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Twins Rock Star Search at LeRoux

Photos by Glenn Summers



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Shoot Ya Best Shot!

Actor Helps Locals in Need

Photos by Terry Jones

Actor Wendell Pierce, star of the HBO hit series *Treme*, and native New Orleansian is Co-Founder of Sterling Farms Grocery Stores. The stores aim to directly provide grocery products to residents in underserved New Orleans neighborhoods since Katrina. The Arena Football League (AFL) joined forces with Pierce to launch the AFL Sterling Farms Fresh Food Drive. Pierce will open three grocery and convenience stores in the coming months, the first will be located at the Lapalco Village Shopping Center Marrero, the site where AFL Sterling Farms Food Drive kicked off the festivities on Tuesday August 7, 2012. At that event 500 needy New Orleans families received free bags of groceries.

Pierce said, "This is one of our outreach campaigns to sack hunger. We are happy to provide many families who are in need with some fresh produce and grocery items that our company will offer. We are grateful to the AFL for inviting us to be a partner on this very gratifying project." Members of both the AVITAE and Arena Bowl XXV teams aided Pierce in greeting residents as the received the fresh produce and grocery items from Sterling Farms.

Adam Robbins, Sr. VP of Marketing and Partnerships of the AFL said, "The AFL Sterling Farms Fresh Food Drive is an excellent prelude to the AVITAE Arena Bowl XXV". This Bowl pits the AFL's top two playoff finalists against each other, the 2012 Arena Bowl will be played at the New Orleans Arena on Friday, August 10.

Robbins also stated, "Being able to give back to the New Orleans community and contributing to such a meaningful mission with Sterling Farms and Wendell Pierce is an exciting opportunity for the AFL."

AVITAE Caffeinated Water, Ram Trucks, and 711 Bourbon Heat sponsored the event with the AFL and Sterling Farms.



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The Grand Opening and Dedication of the Franz Building

By Raghan Dourousseau

The Good Work Network dedicated the historic Franz Building and celebrated the grand opening of the Chase Business Incubator. The renovation project was four years in the making. The property is a 6,800 sq. ft. one-story building located in Central City. The landmark will house the Chase Business Incubator, the expanded offices of the Good Work Network, Adrian's Bakery, and four retail bays to be leased to selected businesses that contribute to the vitality of the community. The Franz Building will facilitate concrete opportunities for up-and-coming entrepreneurs to flourish. The venture aspires to create sustainable development model that will keep the property in the hands of the community. With the addition of the Chase Business Incubator entrepreneurs have an additional resource to help bring their ideas to life. From conception to completion the Good Work Network and the Chase Business Incubator provides entrepreneurs with training, resources, and funding to make the dream of entrepreneurship a reality. The



contribution to the communities these small businesses serve is the opportunity to hire locals; in essence providing economic integrity and economic stability.

The project is a jewel to rising entrepreneurs. It will be a major contributor to the growth and development of the Small Business Sector in New Orleans. In addition to the revitalization of the area the Franz Building will provide affordable retail space that will contribute to the revitalization of Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard. Historically the commercial corridor on Oretha Castle Haley was home to well over 200 businesses and was one of the first racially-mixed shopping areas in the city during its peak in the 1940's and 50's. Small businesses are the life blood of the US Economy. New Orleans moved up 44 positions in the ranks of MarketWatch's Best Cities for Business for 2011. The city that, for two years running was the worst city on the list is now in the top third of the class. Revitalization is in the making and there has never been a better time to bring fresh, new innovations to the city.

Show Me the Money The Black Vote AGAIN Taken for Granted

By Cloves Campbell
Chairman, National
Newspaper Publishers
Association

There are less than 100 days until voters throughout the country will cast their votes for the next President of the United States of America as well as U.S. Senate, Congressional and State Legislatures. The campaign war chests for President Obama and presidential hopeful Mitt Romney total almost \$3 Billion dollars! However as of this writing, not one dollar has been spent in the Black Press. Once again the Black Press has unfortunately been relegated to an "Oh By the Way" campaign that features one

1/2 page ad placed two weeks before the election in all Black newspapers totaling a shameful \$1.2 million dollars! That is the money placed by the

Obama for America Campaign (OFA). The Romney Campaign has committed zero dollars! To put this all into proper perspective, let me fill you in on the approach NNPA took in reference to the ad campaign.

In January of this year we had conversations with the OFA campaign. At that time, we were told that money was not coming in as expected so they could not talk about advertising in Black

Newspapers. In late April, after we were advised that the OFA cam-

paign had only \$800 million dollars, we put together a very detailed advertising proposal for \$21 million dollars which included multiple insertions in all NNPA publications from June through November. The plan suggested a campaign that encouraged three phases of action. The first steps were "Voters

Registration - you can't vote if you are not registered." Second was, "Proper ID - What to take to the polls." Understanding that voter suppression laws vary from state to state, it is important that voters know what to take to the polls in order to vote. The last step is "GOTV - get out the vote." Mobilizing our communities to go to the polls is the key to winning the upcoming

election. Our proposal also included an aggressive digital and social media campaign as well.

Today, once again, we are in the position of being taken for granted. Does Jim Messina know something about Black folks that we don't know? I am beginning to wonder where the Black

Folks are that are advising this campaign? Do they not see the money being spent around them?

Are they not asking why there are no Black pollsters, ad agencies, placement, firms, or other Black owned businesses reaping the benefits of the only \$3 Billion dollars being spent in this campaign season? SHOW ME THE MONEY!

At the end of the election, over \$3 Billion dollars will have been spent. Some people will be very happy. They will not care who wins. To take a quote from the movie TRADING PLACES, "No matter what happens.....DUKE and DUKE still get their commission!" What are we to do?

Do we stand by and again wait four more years? Let's get moving now! Come on Roland Martin, Rev. Sharpton, Rev. Jackson, Cliff Kelly, Steve Harvey, Oprah Winfrey! Let's talk about this now. SHOW ME THE MONEY!

Cloves Campbell is Chairman of National Newspaper Publishers Association and Publisher of the Arizona Informant.

Master Gardener's Corner

Creating a Backyard Oasis

By MG Calla Victoria

When designing a landscape design for your backyard there are several elements to be considered, the first of which is privacy and screening. Jaimie Drurie, Garden Designer Extraordinaire says that you should be able to walk around nude in your backyard! If you are fortunate enough to have tight wood fencing around your yard the problem is solved, however if your yard is enclosed with wrought iron fencing or page wire like mind, then some adjustments are necessary before you can achieve true "nude-stroking privacy" in your yard. The simple answer is prolific flowering vines. I selected four different kinds of vines for my yard. I love the butterfly attracting Hyacinth bean veins that has purple veining in their large heart-shaped foliage, huge electric purple bean pods, and long plums of white flowers. These vines grow like crazy and will curtain a page wire fence. Also I added a couple of passion veins one red and one purple, these too are prolific growers; they have spectacular red or purple flowers, and then there are the delicious passion fruit to be harvested. I also planted baby-leaf spinach which coils so tightly around the page wire fencing that it looks like wallpaper, and when you are ready for a spinach salad,

I need only walk to my back yard. After all of your privacy issues are handled, screen off any unsightly views. One of my neighbors has a pre-Katrina shade that is other than lovely, and the neighbor on the other side of me has a chicken coop that butts up to the fence, both of which I needed to screen off. In both instances I chose the bougainvillea because it is a vigorous climber with an explosion of color.

After privacy is achieved then you need to decide what you want in the yard and you need only be limited by space. If you have a tiny yard then perhaps a seating area and a water feature maybe all that will fit; but if you have yardage then you can add outdoor rooms including lounging areas, kitchen and dining areas, statuary, water features, and lighting. Decide on a theme for your garden oasis, it could be an oriental garden, formal, English, whimsical, or a cottage-style garden, etc. Then survey the yard and find out if there are any confined areas that are surrounded by concrete, areas that are full sun, shady, etc.; and the types of soil you are dealing with. In your shady areas the soil is mostly moist at all times, and the sunny areas the soil is quite dry, and you may have some bog areas which are low-lying and re-

tain water. This information will dictate the type of plant materials you should purchase for those areas, and how to layout the garden. In your full sun areas consider roses and cacti, in your bog areas think water loving plants like elephant ear, Cannas or King Tut Papyrus, in shady areas you want to brighten up those areas with colorful bromeliads that loves the shade and this is where your lounge area should be, in confined areas you can plant those invasive plants like mint and banana trees that we love but don't want to take over the garden.

Fragrance is a very important element in garden design, place fragrant plant material like jasmine, lavender, mint, allspice, alyssum, eucalyptus, or fragrant rose bushes at the entrance of your garden so that you and your guests are welcomed into the garden with a pleasant aromatic experience; also sprinkle fragrant plants throughout your garden to heighten your senses.

Mystery is another important element to consider in garden design. Your garden should unfold to the eye and not be completely visible at first glance. Pathways should curve and meander to draw in with wonder as to what is around the bend. Use hedges, a grouping of container gardens or other partitions to divide

your yards into garden rooms. The garden should be an extension of your home; inside your house everything is not visible at first glance, think in those same terms for your garden oasis. The outdoor kitchen should be near the outdoor dining area, outdoor living rooms are quite popular with all-weather furniture and rugs. Entry is another important design feature in garden design. Create entry ways for each of your garden rooms; this can be simply accomplished by placing a lattice or iron archway at the entrance, or flank the entrance with two large urns or statuary.

Water features lend serenity to any garden oasis, they can be as simple as a small fountain or as elaborate as a pond with a waterfall, you are only limited by space and budget. Garden rooms just like the rest of your home should be enjoyed day or night. Gardens are great during the day but can become magical at night; this is easily accomplished with Lighting. Solar technology makes lighting your garden a snap, you can find pathway lighting, spot and flood lights, and hanging lanterns all in solar. No electricians needed! Enjoy creating your garden oasis!

Remember, never be too busy to stop and enjoy the beautiful flowers.

Local Woman Named Outstanding Minority-Owned Small Business

Bridgeja' Baker, owner of Creative Jewelry by Bridgeja', has been chosen as this year's recipient for the prestigious Outstanding Minority-Owned Small Business award given by The SCORE Foundation and sponsored by AT&T.

SCORE, mentors to America's small business, serves over 350,000 clients annually and honors their most successful clients at The SCORE Foundation's annual award ceremony celebrating excellence on Thursday, August 16th in New Orleans, LA. Cre-

ative Jewelry by Bridgeja' will be honored for demonstrating unique vision, innovation and achievement as an Outstanding Minority-Owned Small Business.

Creative Jewelry by Bridgeja' is receiving this award based on their successful small business growth and hard work every day. We have donated a percentage of our earnings to the SPCA, Children's Hospital and Unity of Greater New Orleans

"We are so proud to be recognized for our hard work as a small business. Out of the hundreds of

SCORE clients, our accomplishments made us stand out. Thank you to our wonderful community for supporting us and helping us succeed. This would not have been possible without you" says Bridgeja' Baker.

SCORE CEO Ken Yancey says, "The SCORE Awards celebrates and honors successful and innovative entrepreneurs who inspire us all and the small business advocates who support entrepreneurship in America." Yancey adds, "As the economy works to recover from recession, these

small business successes represent America's success through innovation and job growth."

The SCORE Foundation President Mark Dobosz says, "Our clients and supporters inspire other small businesses as they proceed on their path to success. SCORE is honored to celebrate the people and businesses that fuel our economic prosperity and social progress."

You can read more about this success story at <http://www.score.org/success-stories/creative-jewelry-bridgeja>.

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